

Message Text

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PO

SUBJ: AMB MCCLOSKEY CALL ON PRIMIN GONCALVES

1. PRIMIN GONCALVES LEFT COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING WHICH HE WAS CHAIRING TO MEET WITH AMB MCCLOSKEY FOR HOUR ON FRIDAY EVENING, NOV 8. AMB MCCLOSKEY ACCOMPANIED BY IBERIAN DIRECTOR LUKENS, SPECIAL ASSISTANT PEZZULLO AND DCM POST.

2. GONCALVES OPENED MEETING WITH CORDIAL GREETING AND EXPRESSED HOPE FOR MISSION'S SUCCESS, WHICH HE SAID WOULD BE BENEFICIAL TO BOTH COUNTRIES. MCCLOSKEY EXPLAINED REASON FOR VISIT AND EXPRESSED APPRECIATION TO GONCALVES FOR INTERRUPTING CABINET MEETING. HE THEN OUTLINED WHAT HE HAD SAID TO COSTA GOMES RE AZORES AND TOLD PRIMIN IT WAS HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT USG SHOULD PROCEED WITH NEGOTIATIONS AND THAT HE (MCCLOSKEY) WOULD BE IN TOUCH WITH THEMIDO.

3. MCCLOSKEY THEN ASKED GONCALVES IF HE THOUGHT THERE WOULD BE OPPOSITION WITHIN GOP TO EXTENSION OF AGREEMENT. GONCALVES REPLIED WITH EMPHATIC "NO". HE ANSWER WAS AS FOLLOWS: "ALL (HE REPEATED ALL) MEMBERS OF GOVERNMENT UNDERSTAND THAT WE RESPECT PROMISES WE HAVE MADE. THIS IS WRITTEN IN THE AFM PROGRAM. WE HAVE NO DOUBTS WITHIN GOVERNMENT THAT RELATIONS WITH USA MUST BE STRENGTHENED". GONCALVES WENT ON TO REITERATE THAT PORTUGAL WOULD REMAIN FAITHFUL MEMBER OF NATO.

4. MCCLOSKEY REPLIED THAT GONCALVES' ANSWER WAS REASSURING
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BUT ADDED THAT PERHAPS FURTHER EXPLANATION WOULD BE HELPFUL

INASMUCH AS PRESENT GOP POLITICAL STRUCTURE NOT THOROUGHLY UNDERSTOOD IN US. GONCALVES THEN WENT ON TO POINT OUT DIFFICULTIES GOP HAD IN ESTABLISHING DEMOCRACY AFTER 48 YEARS OF DICTATORSHIP. HE SAID PORTUGAL WANTED "PLURALISTIC DEMOCRACY" BUT THAT IT WOULD TAKE TIME TO CATCH UP WITH US WHICH HAD LONG HAD RIGHT TO STRIKE AND OTHER FREEDOMS WHICH WERE COMPLETELY NEW TO PORTUGAL. HE NOTED THAT AT TIME US HAD FDR AND "NEW DEAL", PORTUGAL HAD SALAZAR.

5. CONVERSATION THEN TURNED TO FREEDOM OF THE PRESS. MCCLOSKEY NOTED THAT THERE HAD BEEN A NUMBER OF STORIES IN THE PRESS CONCERNING ALLEGED CIA ACTIVITIES. MCCLOSKEY STATED CATEGORICALLY THAT THESE WERE WITHOUT FOUNDATION. GONCALVES SAID HE WAS PLEASED BY THIS REASSURANCE BUT IT WAS THE FAULT OF THE AMERICAN PAPERS THEMSELVES THAT THERE WAS SO MUCH TALK ABOUT CIA ACTIVITIES IN PORTUGAL AND SPAIN. HE SAID THE US PRESS HAD BROUGHT UP THE SUBJECT OF CIA ACTIVITIES ON A WORLDWIDE BASIS, INCLUDING CHILE, AND THIS HAD BEEN ECHOED IN THE FOREIGN PRESS, RESULTING IN GREAT IMPACT ON PORTUGUESE PUBLIC OPINION. MCCLOSKEY NOTED THAT IN A FREE SOCIETY THE PRESS IS OFTEN IRRESPONSIBLE BUT OBSERVED THIS WAS PREFERABLE TO PRESS REPRESSION. GONCALVES AGREED BUT WENT ON TO EXPLAIN THAT AFTER 50 YEARS OF REPRESSION IN PORTUGAL, THE PRESS HAD "EXPLODED". HE FELT THAT THE PRESS WAS IMPROVING BUT THAT THE LOCAL JOURNALISTS HAD LITTLE EXPERIENCE IN WORKING UNDER A LIBERAL REGIME.

6. MCCLOSKEY THEN ASKED WHAT THE DEGREE OF COMMUNIST INFLUENCE WAS IN THE PORTUGUESE PRESS. GONCALVES' REPLY WAS THAT THE PCP HAS A WEEKLY ORGAN, AS HAS EACH OF THE OTHER POLITICAL PARTIES; HOWEVER, INDIVIDUAL WRITERS REFLECT THEIR OWN POLITICAL TENDENCIES, AND IT IS QUITE POSSIBLE AND EVEN PROBABLE THAT OPPOSING TENDENCIES WILL APPEAR WITH THE SAME NEWSPAPER. GONCALVES FELT THAT IN GENERAL THE PRESS SUPPORTED THE MFA AND THE GOP DESIRE TO DEVELOP A DEMOCRATIC PORTUGAL. HE NOTED AGAIN THAT AFTER 50 YEARS OF FASCISM -- THE ONLY PLACE IN EUROPE WHERE IT HAD LASTED SO LONG -- IT WAS NATURAL THAT THE COUNTRY WOULD REFLECT POLITICAL TENDENCIES FROM THE CENTER TO THE LEFT, RATHER THAN FROM THE RIGHT. HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT AFTER 48 YEARS OF NO POLITICAL LIFE, THE GOP WAS TRYING TO

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"CONSOLIDATE TENDENCIES IN ALL FIELDS". HE SAID THAT THIS WAS DIFFICULT INASMUCH AS THERE ARE "ENEMIES" IN ALL FIELDS WHO FAVOR THEIR OWN INTERESTS AGAINST THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE. HE SAID THESE "ENEMIES" RAN THE GAMUT OF THE SOCIAL SPECTRUM FROM WORKERS THROUGH THE BOURGEOISIE.

7. THE CONVERSATION THEN TURNED TO AZORES BASE. MCCLOSKEY EXPLAINED THAT USG WISHED TO RESUME NEGOTIATIONS AND TO ITSELF

IDENTIFY AND PROPOSE TO GOP A FAIR COMPENSATION FOR THE CONTINUED USE OF THE BASE. MCCLOSKEY WENT ON TO SAY THAT USG WAS SENDING A TECHNICAL TEAM TO DISCUSS PORTUGUESE PRIORITIES IN THE FIELD OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, UNRELATED TO BASE ISSUE, BUT THAT NO DECISION WOULD BE MADE AS TO WHETHER TO CARRY THESE TALKS ON FURTHER UNTIL A NEW ASSESSMENT HAD BEEN MADE OF THE POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS. IN THIS REGARD, MCCLOSKEY ASKED ABOUT A REPORT HE HAD HEARD IN SPAIN TO THE EFFECT THAT THE ARABS HAD OFFERED MONEY TO THE GOP. HE POINTED OUT THAT SOME PEOPLE IN THE US MIGHT ALSO DRAW A CONNECTION BETWEEN THESE REPORTS AND SOARES' VISIT TO LIBYA. GONCALVES SAID THERE WAS NO BASIS IN FACT AT ALL FOR THESE RUMORS AND THAT SOARES WAS ONLY GOING TO LIBYA IN RESPONSE TO LIBYAN INITIATIVES IN THE FIELD OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION. GONCALVES SAID THERE WAS NO QUESTION OF DISCUSSING THE BASES WITH THE LIBYANS. GONCALVES WENT ON TO ADD, HOWEVER, THAT PORTUGAL DESIRED GOOD RELATIONS WITH ALL COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD AND WANTED TO BE PARTICULARLY OPEN WITH THE ARABS AND THE AFRICANS. HE THOUGHT, THEREFORE, THAT THE GOP MIGHT BE RECEPTIVE TO AID FROM LIBYA, IF IT IS IN THE GOP NATIONAL INTEREST AND THERE ARE NO STRINGS TO THE AID WHICH MIGHT RESTRICT THE FREEDOM OF CHOICE OF THE GOP. HE SPECIFICALLY SAID THAT NO AGREEMENT WOULD BE MADE WITH LIBYA WHICH WOULD RESULT IN A WORSENING OF RELATIONS WITH THE US.

8. MCCLOSKEY THEN REPEATED FOR GONCALVES' BENEFIT THE ESSENCE OF THE SECRETARY'S CONVERSATION IN WASHINGTON WITH COSTA GOMES IN WHICH THE SECRETARY POINTED OUT THAT WE HAD NO WISH BUT TO HELP PORTUGAL BUT THAT WE WERE CONCERNED BY AN APPARENT DRIFT TO THE LEFT AND WOULD NOT WISH TO SEE AN INCREASE IN COMMUNIST INFLUENCE. MCCLOSKEY WENT ON TO SAY THAT SUCH AN INCREASE IN COMMUNIST INFLUENCE WOULD BE OF SERIOUS CONCERN TO US NATIONAL INTERESTS, WOULD BE HARMFUL TO THE ALLIANCE, AND WOULD MAKE LEGISLATIVE SUPPORT FOR US ASSISTANCE TO PORTUGAL ALMOST

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IMPOSSIBLE. HE POINTED OUT, HOWEVER, THAT GIVEN THESE POLITICAL CONSTRAINTS, THE SECRETARY HAD AGREED THAT THE USG WOULD SEND A TEAM OF EXPERTS TO PORTUGAL TO IDENTIFY THE PRIORITIES NEEDED. MCCLOSKEY MADE IT CLEAR THAT THIS DISCUSSION ON POSSIBLE ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE WAS IN NO WAY RELATED TO THE BASE QUESTION.

9. GONCALVES THANKED MCCLOSKEY AND SAID THAT HE WAS PLEASED THAT THE TECHNICAL TEAM WOULD BE HERE AND THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO MEET WITH THEM.

SCOTT

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